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The discovery in the foundations of the Temple of Fortune at Pompeii of a small walled in space containing an empty shell of a tortoise induced Professor Mau to write a treatise, which was read the other day before the Archaeological Society of Rome, on the ancient superstition of insuring the safety of a building by immuring a living creature in its walls.

The idea, explained the Professor, obtained in ancient Greece and throughout the Balkan Peninsula that no more effective protection against evil spirits could be found than by enclosing in the walls of a house a living being, preferably human, so that its soul might live in it for ever and guard it from unseen harm. When the city of Antioch was rebuilt after an earthquake by the Emperor Trajan a maiden was immured alive in one of the chief temples and a statue erected to her memory as the city's Goddess of Fortune.

Even to this day the ancient belief survives in the Near East, but a substitute is now generally found for the sacrifice. To propitiate the spirits an animal, either alive or slaughtered beforehand, is placed within the foundations or the walls, or more commonly a person's shadow is measured with a piece of string, and this measure, representing the person concerned, is then walled up in the masonry.

In the case of the Pompeian temple the tortoise was doubtless selected because it would keep alive for a long period without nourishment, and the belief prevailed that the charm was particularly potent while the victim remained alive.—*New York Sun*, May 2, 1908.

I recall a student who once added a little to a well-merited reputation for stupidity by translating in an examination paper Horace's line *nec vespertinus circum gemit ursus ovile* by "nor does the vespertinian ursus grunt around the ovile", and most of your readers have likely heard of the boy who, after translating the present *rex fugit* correctly, was told to translate it in the perfect, when he promptly said "The king has fleas".

EDWIN POST

All your readers must enjoy the little corner devoted to felicitous blunders in translation. Perhaps the following may deserve a place. In Ep. I. I. 104 Horace says to Maecenas *prave sectum stomacheris ob unguem*. This was once rendered, "You are sick at the stomach at the sight of a mutilated snake".

JOHN GREENE

A new entrance to the Forum has been planned at the end of the Via Cavour, where the temporary office of the excavations used to stand, and where now about 3,000 cubic meters of earth have been removed. It is hoped that the old gateway of the Farnese gardens on the Palatine, which is now scattered in fragments, may be made to serve as the entrance.—*New York Evening Post*, August 8.

LATIN VERSION

Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep sea of misery
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on,
Day and night and night and day
Drifting on his weary way.

.....

Ay! may flowering islands lie
In the waters of wide misery!

—Shelley.

INSULAE FORTUNATAE

Insulas multas virides necesse est
in mari lato et misero iacere;
sin minus, fessus pavidusque nauta
pallidus ore

non iter posset facere usque vento
quotquot et noctes pereunt diesque,
fluctibus saevis agitatus atque
aequore fessus.

En, iacent late nitidae et refertae
floribus gratis homini dolenti
insulae tales in aqua patente, in
aequore luctus!

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY GEORGE DWIGHT KELLOGG

Not pleasures, as most know them, lead the way
Into the time beyond time; nor agree
With every year of life; and are not strong
In changing place, themselves unchanged to be.
But youth and age meet fairly at the feast
Made ready by the true joys of the mind;
By these prosperity becomes increased,
And refuge from distress in them we find.
At home they bring delight. When forth we fare
They burden not. They watch with us at night,
With steadfastness the hours of exile share
Or render every holiday more bright.
Thus, Cicero, you wrote of joys. We heard
And found an endless joy within your word.

NORMAL COLLEGE JEANNETTE S. SEWELL

It may be that Homer in the original Greek is not so much read in these days as he was a century ago. Nevertheless, estimated in dollars and cents, there is good reason for thinking that the Father of Epic Poetry has attained a valuation among the book collectors of this generation that is quite unprecedented in the annals of this kind of literary appreciation. At a sale of rare books in London this month \$1,650 was paid for a "first edition" of Homer. At a similar sale just a year ago the record price of \$1,900 was paid for a copy of the same edition—the editio princeps, issued at Florence in 1488. It is interesting to note, moreover, that the library from which the Homer was purchased this year at Sotheby's was the well-known "Hoskier Library", which was recently sent from New Jersey to England.—*New York Times*, July 11, '08.